

### **REMARKS**

Applicants acknowledged with appreciation the allowance of claims 19, and 15-18, renumbered as claims 1-5.

Applicants propose to amend claims 17-19 to place them in better form. No new matter is involved and the scope of the claims is not changed by this Amendment. Reconsideration of this application, as amended, is respectfully requested.

### **Claim Amendments**

Applicants propose amending claims 17-19 to place them in better form.

Applicants propose amending claim 17 to make it more idiomatic by changing "Method" to --A method--, and propose amending claim 18 to correct the spelling of the word "wherein."

Applicants propose amending claim 19 to change "including" to --comprising--, to make claim 19 consistent with claim 17, which uses "comprising" as its transition term. Applicants note that "comprising" and "including" are both open ended claim transition terms. Applicants also propose to remove the reference numerals in parenthesis from claim 19. MPEP 2608.01(m) clearly states that the use of reference characters in claims is to be considered as having no effect on the scope of the claims. Moreover, Applicants submit that deletion of the reference figures in parenthesis from claim 19 makes the claims read better and places them in better form.

**COMMENTS ON EXAMINER'S STATEMENT OF REASONS FOR ALLOWANCE**

The reasons for allowance repeat, verbatim, the subject matter recited in claim 19. However, claim 19 is not the only independent claim that was allowed. Claim 17 is the other independent claim that was allowed and claim 17 recites a different combination of features from the combination of features recited in claim 19. Thus, to the extent that the Statement of reasons for Allowance indicates that claim 17 is allowable because of the combination of features recited in claim 19, Applicants respectfully submit that the Statement of Reasons for Allowance is misleading, and should be corrected.

Applicants respectfully submit that claim 17 is allowable at least for the combination of features recited therein, which differs from the subject matter recited in claim 19 in a number of respects.

**CONCLUSION**

Applicants respectfully request that a supplemental Statement of Reasons for Allowance that accurately states why claim 17 is allowable be prepared and mailed.

Applicants also respectfully request that this Amendment under 37 CFR be entered.

If the Examiner believes, for any reason, that personal communication will expedite prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone

Robert J. Webster, Registration No. 46,472, at (703) 205-8000, in the Washington, D.C. area.

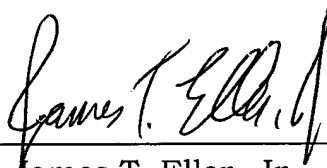
Prompt and favorable consideration of this Amendment and the aforementioned comments is respectfully requested.

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies, to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-2448 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16 or 1.17; particularly, extension of time fees.

Respectfully submitted,

BIRCH, STEWART, KOLASCH & BIRCH, LLP

By: \_\_\_\_\_



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